



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Paul Dewar

Member of Parliament / Député
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre

BY FAX

August 9, 2013

Hon. John Baird
Minister of Foreign Affairs
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

I write to you today regarding the discrimination and attacks on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals in Russia. As you are aware, recently passed legislation makes it illegal to disseminate information or opinions that Russian authorities may view as 'propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations'.

Passage of this legislation has led to mistreatment and persecution of LGBT individuals throughout Russia based solely upon their desire to express themselves and to associate with like-minded individuals and organizations. Due to the harmful effects this law is having on its own citizens, Russian civil society organizations have rallied to this cause. They have been joined in their efforts by their concerned Canadian counterparts in expressing their discontent over the treatment of LGBT peoples and have voiced their view that this conduct is contrary to our collective Canadian value of respect for human rights.

In light of this law's passage by Russian legislators, human rights defenders throughout the world are asking for the Canadian government to take action to notify the Russian people that we stand behind human rights everywhere.



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Consequently, I call upon you, in your role as the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in addition to continuing to speak out against the homophobic legislation and attacks on LGBT Russians, to institute a visa ban for the originators of the law in question. The Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development should also identify opportunities to support LGBT activists in Russia. Finally, I ask you to publically endorse the recent UN "Free and Equal" campaign and work with like-minded countries to oppose homophobic and transphobic resolutions in all UN bodies.

I look forward to working with you to on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Dewar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul Dewar, MP
Ottawa Centre
CEP 232